

**Subpart C—Obligations Under This Part**

PROHIBITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

**§ 280.20 What must I not do in conducting Geological and Geophysical (G&G) prospecting or scientific research?**

While conducting G&G prospecting or scientific research activities under a permit or notice, you must not:

- (a) Interfere with or endanger operations under any lease, right-of-way, easement, right-of-use, notice, or permit issued or maintained under the Act;
- (b) Cause harm or damage to life (including fish and other aquatic life), property, or the marine, coastal, or human environment;
- (c) Cause harm or damage to any mineral resources (in areas leased or not leased);
- (d) Cause pollution;
- (e) Disturb archaeological resources;
- (f) Create hazardous or unsafe conditions;
- (g) Unreasonably interfere with or cause harm to other uses of the area; or
- (h) Claim any oil, gas, sulphur, or other minerals you discover while conducting operations under a permit or notice.

**§ 280.21 What must I do in conducting G&G prospecting or scientific research?**

While conducting G&G prospecting or scientific research activities under a permit or notice, you must:

- (a) Immediately report to the RD if you:
  - (1) Detect hydrocarbon or any other mineral occurrences;
  - (2) Detect environmental hazards that imminently threaten life and property; or
  - (3) Adversely affect the environment, aquatic life, archaeological resources, or other uses of the area where you are prospecting or conducting scientific research activities.
- (b) Consult and coordinate your G&G activities with other users of the area for navigation and safety purposes.
- (c) If you conduct shallow test drilling or deep stratigraphic test drilling activities, you must use the best avail-

able and safest technologies that the RD considers economically feasible.

**§ 280.22 What must I do when seeking approval for modifications?**

Before you begin modified operations, you must submit a written request describing the modifications and receive the RD's oral or written approval. If circumstances preclude a written request, you must make an oral request and follow up in writing.

**§ 280.23 How must I cooperate with inspection activities?**

- (a) You must allow our representatives to inspect your G&G prospecting or any scientific research activities that are being conducted under a permit. They will determine whether operations are adversely affecting the environment, aquatic life, archaeological resources, or other uses of the area.
- (b) MMS will reimburse you for food, quarters, and transportation that you provide for our representatives if you send in your reimbursement request to the region that issued the permit within 90 days of the inspection.

**§ 280.24 What reports must I file?**

- (a) You must submit status reports on a schedule specified in the permit and include a daily log of operations.
- (b) You must submit a final report of G&G prospecting or scientific research activities under a permit within 30 days after you complete acquisition activities under the permit. You may combine the final report with the last status report and must include each of the following:
  - (1) A description of the work performed.
  - (2) Charts, maps, plats and digital navigation data in a format specified by the RD, showing the areas and blocks in which any G&G prospecting or permitted scientific research activities were conducted. Identify the lines of geophysical traverses and their locations including a reference sufficient to identify the data produced during each activity.
  - (3) The dates on which you conducted the actual prospecting or scientific research activities.
  - (4) A summary of any:

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- (i) Hard mineral, hydrocarbon, or sulphur occurrences encountered;
  - (ii) Environmental hazards; and
  - (iii) Adverse effects of the G&G prospecting or scientific research activities on the environment, aquatic life, archaeological resources, or other uses of the area in which the activities were conducted.
- (5) Other descriptions of the activities conducted as specified by the RD.

### **INTERRUPTED ACTIVITIES**

#### **§ 280.25 When may MMS require me to stop activities under this part?**

(a) We may temporarily stop prospecting or scientific research activities under a permit when the RD determines that:

(1) Activities pose a threat of serious, irreparable, or immediate harm. This includes damage to life (including fish and other aquatic life), property, and any minerals (in areas leased or not leased), to the marine, coastal, or human environment, or to an archaeological resource;

(2) You failed to comply with any applicable law, regulation, order or provision of the permit. This would include our required submission of reports, well records or logs, and G&G data and information within the time specified; or

(3) Stopping the activities is in the interest of national security or defense.

(b) The RD will advise you either orally or in writing of the procedures to temporarily stop activities. We will confirm an oral notification in writing and deliver all written notifications by courier or certified/registered mail. You must stop all activities under a permit as soon as you receive an oral or written notification.

#### **§ 280.26 When may I resume activities?**

The RD will advise you when you may start your permit activities again.

#### **§ 280.27 When may MMS cancel my permit?**

The RD may cancel a permit at any time.

(a) If we cancel your permit, the RD will advise you by certified or registered mail 30 days before the can-

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cellation date and will state the reason.

(b) After we cancel your permit, you are still responsible for proper abandonment of any drill site according to the requirements of 30 CFR 251.7(b)(8). You must comply with all other obligations specified in this part or in the permit.

#### **§ 280.28 May I relinquish my permit?**

(a) You may relinquish your permit at any time by advising the RD by certified or registered mail 30 days in advance.

(b) After you relinquish your permit, you are still responsible for proper abandonment of any drill sites according to the requirements of 30 CFR 251.7(b)(8). You must also comply with all other obligations specified in this part or in the permit.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

#### **§ 280.29 Will MMS monitor the environmental effects of my activity?**

We will evaluate the potential of proposed prospecting or scientific research activities for adverse impact on the environment to determine the need for mitigation measures.

#### **§ 280.30 What activities will not require environmental analysis?**

We anticipate that activities of the type listed below typically will not cause significant environmental impact and will normally be categorically excluded from additional environmental analysis. The types of activities include:

(a) Gravity and magnetometric observations and measurements;

(b) Bottom and subbottom acoustic profiling or imaging without the use of explosives;

(c) Hard minerals sampling of a limited nature such as shallow test drilling;

(d) Water and biotic sampling, if the sampling does not adversely affect shellfish beds, marine mammals, or an endangered species or if permitted by the National Marine Fisheries Service or another Federal agency;

(e) Meteorological observations and measurements, including the setting of instruments;